

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions.

1. (AMENDED) An isolated nucleic acid that hybridizes to ~~SEQ ID NO:1 or a complement thereof~~ a tobacco quinolate phosphoribosyl transferase messenger RNA ~~under a wash stringency of 0.3M NaCl, 0.03M sodium citrate, and 0.1% SDS at 60° to 70°C, wherein said nucleic acid is greater than or equal to~~ comprises at least 30 consecutive nucleotides of SEQ ID NO:1 or its complement.

2. (AMENDED) A nucleic acid construct comprising, in the 5' to 3' direction, a promoter operable in a plant cell and atthe nucleic acid according to claim 1 positioned downstream from said promoter and operatively associated therewith.

3. (AMENDED) A nucleic acid construct comprising, in the 5' to 3' direction, a plant promoter and atthe nucleic acid according to claim 1 positioned downstream from said promoter and operatively associated therewith, said nucleic acid in antisense orientation.

4-11. (CANCELED).

12. (AMENDED) A plant cell comprising atthe nucleic acid construct according to claim 2 or 3.

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A transgenic tobacco plant comprising the plant cell of claim 12.

14-15. (CANCELED).

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of making a transgenic tobacco plant cell having reduced quinolate phosphoribosyl transferase (QPRTase) expression, said method comprising[[: ]] introducing the nucleic acid construct of claim 2 into the tobacco plant cell to produce a transgenic tobacco plant cell having reduced quinolate phosphoribosyl transferase expression as compared to a tobacco plant cell lacking the nucleic acid construct of claim 2.

17. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 16, wherein said nucleic acid is in antisense orientation.

18. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 16, wherein said nucleic acid is in sense orientation.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method of claim 16, wherein said tobacco plant cell is a Burley variety.

20-25. (CANCELED).

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of producing a transgenic tobacco seed[[s]], comprising collecting a seed from the transgenic tobacco plant of claim 13 or 31 or a progeny thereof, wherein said tobacco seed comprises the nucleic acid according to claim 1.

27-30. (CANCELED).

31. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A reduced nicotine transgenic tobacco plant comprising:

an exogenous nucleic acid construct comprising, in the 5' to 3' direction, a promoter and a ~~nucleic acid that hybridizes to SEQ ID NO:1 under a wash stringency of 0.3M NaCl, 0.03M sodium citrate, and 0.1% SDS at 60° to 70°C and the~~ nucleic acid according to claim 1 operably associated with said promoter;

wherein said tobacco plant has a reduced amount of nicotine as compared to a non-transformed control tobacco plant.

32. (AMENDED) The ~~method~~transgenic tobacco plant of claim 31, wherein said ~~nucleic acid construct comprises a nucleic acid sequence that hybridizes to SEQ ID NO:1 and~~ said nucleic acid is in antisense orientation.

33. (AMENDED) The ~~method~~transgenic tobacco plant of claim 31, wherein said ~~nucleic acid construct comprises a nucleic acid sequence that hybridizes to SEQ ID NO:1 and~~ said nucleic acid is in sense orientation.

34-42. (CANCELED).

43. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A progeny of a plant according to claim 13 or 31, wherein said progeny is a transgenic plant.

44. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A seed of a tobacco plant according to claim 13, 31 or 43 or a progeny thereof, wherein said seed comprises the nucleic acid according to claim 1.

45. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A crop comprising a plurality of plants according to claim 13, 31 or 43, or a progeny thereof, wherein said progeny is a transgenic plant, planted together in an agricultural field.

46-56. (CANCELED).

57. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of producing a reduced nicotine tobacco plant comprising:

a) introducing the nucleic acid of claim 1 into a tobacco plant cell so as to obtain a transformed tobacco plant cell, wherein said transformed tobacco plant cell has reduced

expression of a quinolate phosphoribosyl transferase gene as compared to a non-transformed tobacco plant cell; and

b) regenerating the transformed tobacco plant cell into a reduced nicotine tobacco plant. \

58-60. (CANCELED).

61. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 57, wherein said nucleic acid of claim 1 is in antisense orientation.

62. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method according to claim 57, wherein said nucleic acid of claim 1 is in sense orientation.

63-94. (CANCELED).

95. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~An isolated~~ The nucleic acid of claim 1, comprising at least about 50 consecutive nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or its complement.

96. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 94~~1~~, comprising at least about 75 consecutive nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or its complement.

97. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 94~~1~~, comprising at least about 100 consecutive nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or its complement.

98. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 94~~1~~, comprising at least about 125 consecutive nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or its complement.

99. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 941, comprising at least about 150 consecutive nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or its complement.

100. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 941, comprising at least about 200 consecutive nucleotides of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 or its complement.

101-102. (CANCELED).

103. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 941, wherein the nucleic acid is DNA.

104. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 941, wherein the nucleic acid is RNA.

105. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A vector comprising the nucleic acid of claim 941.

106. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~An isolated~~ cell comprising the vector of claim 105.

107. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The nucleic acid of claim 941, further comprising a detectable moiety.